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# Civic Engagement and Voter Participation among Turkish and Moroccan Minorities in Rotterdam

Marieke van Londen, Karen Phalet and Louk Hagendoorn

*Across Europe, voter turnout among immigrant minorities is lower than among native citizens. Social capital theorists like Putnam argue that being part of civic organisations fosters social trust which results in increased political participation. To examine Putnam's argument, we asked random samples of Turkish and Moroccan minorities in Rotterdam about their participation in various types of association, to what extent they trust others, and whether they voted in the last local and national elections. Our central research question was: 'Do civic organisations that generate trust have a more positive influence on participation in local and national elections than others?' We make a distinction between cross-ethnic (e.g. a Dutch neighbourhood association) and co-ethnic types of organisation (e.g. a Turkish youth club), as well as between horizontally structured or client-oriented (e.g. religious associations) and authority-oriented organisations (e.g. trade unions). We argue that cross-ethnic and client-oriented types of organisation are the most likely to foster generalised trust in one's fellow citizens. Our results confirm the expected direct positive relationship between cross-ethnic organisations and local voter turnout. Participation in co-ethnic organisations is indirectly positively related to voting through cross-ethnic participation. In addition, Moroccans are more likely to vote in local and national elections if they take part in client-oriented organisations, whereas Turks are more likely to vote if they are part of authority-oriented organisations. Lastly, although Turks with higher levels of social trust are more likely to vote, contrary to theoretical expectations, trust does not explain the observed relationships between civic engagement and voting.*

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## Introduction

Although civil rights, like the freedom to form associations, apply to citizens and non-citizens alike, European countries severely circumscribe the political rights of non-citizens. In the 1980s some European countries introduced local voting rights for denizens, i.e. non-citizens with a legal and permanent residence status. National voting rights remain reserved for residents with citizenship status (Entzinger 1999). Across Europe, however, voter turnout among people of immigrant origin who are formally enfranchised is consistently lower than among native citizens (Messina 2004). Denizens, in particular, are less likely to participate in local elections. In general, lower-class origins and a lingering attachment to the politics of the country of origin are believed to influence their low voter turnout (Fieldhouse and Purdam 2002; Messina 2004). However, some ethnic communities, like the Turkish community in the Netherlands, at times show turnouts comparable to that of the native population (Dominguez Martinez *et al.* 2002). Differences in voter turnout between ethnic communities have been explained primarily by varying degrees of internal integration, as measured by the number of ethnic associations (Fennema and Tillie 1999).

Social capital theorists, in particular Putnam (1993, 2000), argue that higher levels of associational activity result in greater political participation, e.g. voter turnout. Civic organisations socialise and educate citizens by teaching them the codes of conduct with respect to public behaviour, commitment and responsibility. By taking part in civic organisations people learn to trust each other and to care about social issues and public affairs. The first aim of this study is to test Putnam's thesis, derived from social capital theory, which says that the impact civic engagement has on voting is mediated by a general sense of social trust. In accordance with the existing literature, we restrict the definition of civic organisations to NGOs: non-market and non-state organisations (Kaufman 1999).

While Putnam mainly studied the civic engagement of native populations, Fennema and Tillie (1999) were among the first to extend Putnam's theory to ethnic minorities. They studied ethnic minorities in Amsterdam and found that, at the aggregate level, higher average levels of political trust and participation were associated with an active associational life. Specifically, the density of ethnic networks was measured by counting the interlocking directorates of registered ethnic organisations in Amsterdam. In other communes in the Netherlands, the number of ethnic organisations per inhabitant and the organisational density, as indicated by overlapping ethnic networks, were associated with higher levels of voter turnout and with higher numbers of ethnic councillors (Van Heelsum 2005). In contrast, cross-national replications of Fennema and Tillie's (1999) Amsterdam study have typically relied on individual-level survey data. Overall, their results provide mixed evidence to

support the expected correlation between the associational life of ethnic minorities and their political involvement in the host country (Jacobs and Tillie 2004). Moreover, most studies do not systematically test the role of social trust as a key mediating mechanism (with the exception of Togeby 2004), nor do they predict under what conditions trust among co-ethnics may generalise to the wider society and its political institutions.

In our study we test the role of social trust as a key mediating mechanism and we examine which types of organisation are most likely to generate a general sense of trust. Accordingly, we predict that certain types of civic organisation will have different effects on voter turnout among ethnic minorities. Furthermore, we replicate the effects of participation in civic organisations across two types of election, local and national. As an empirical test, we analyse representative survey data on civic engagement, social trust and political participation among Turkish and Moroccan minorities in Rotterdam (Phalet *et al.* 2000). Rotterdam and Amsterdam show the highest concentrations of non-Western immigrant minorities; within this category Turks and Moroccans are two major immigrant communities. We use the terms immigrant, Turk and Moroccan broadly to refer to all residents of Turkish or Moroccan origin, including those who were born in the Netherlands and who have acquired Dutch nationality.

### **Civic Engagement and Voting: Theories and Hypotheses**

According to Putnam (1993, 2000) civic organisations have an indirect effect on the political participation of their members. They teach their members the civic virtues necessary to cooperate—trust and generalised reciprocity. Citizens engaged in civic organisations will in turn generalise these virtues to the rest of society and its political institutions. They will participate in public affairs, like elections, because they trust that others will participate too. Citizens who expect others to comply with authority are not afraid that they will be taken advantage of if they follow the rules, and they find it easier to trust authorities (Brehm and Rahn 1997).

Various studies on the relationship between civic engagement and social trust come to different conclusions. For example, Freitag's (2003) study of the general population in Switzerland finds no relation between active membership of organisations and social trust. This finding holds for political, economic, community and private-interest organisations. Only participation in cultural organisations showed a positive correlation with social trust. However, this effect disappears after correcting for television viewing, gender, age, marital status and regional provenance. In contrast, Brehm and Rahn's (1997) study in the US shows a reciprocal relationship between civic engagement and generalised trust, where the effect of civic engagement on trust is stronger than the reverse effect. Extending Putnam's civic engagement argument to ethnic minorities, Fennema and Tillie (1999) examined the relationship between minority civic engagement, political trust and voting in Amsterdam. Specifically, network analysis revealed a greater number of interlocking directorates, indicating a

higher density of ethnic associational life in the Turkish community compared with Moroccans and Surinamese/Antilleans. This finding coincides with a higher degree of political trust and local voter turnout among Turks (Fennema and Tillie 1999). Togeby (2004) examined the relationship between civic engagement and local voter turnout at an individual level among immigrant minorities in Denmark, but found no evidence of the mediating role of social trust.

Since evidence of the influence of social trust on voting behaviour is inconclusive, the first aim of our study was to replicate individual-level relationships between civic engagement, social trust and voting among Turkish and Moroccan minorities in Rotterdam. We examine the following hypotheses derived from social capital theory:

*H1: civic engagement is positively related to the participation of ethnic minorities in municipal and national elections;*

*H2: the relationship between civic engagement and voting is mediated by social trust.*

Turkish and Moroccan populations were expected to display a similar pattern of correlations between membership of civic organisations, social trust and voting behaviour. Moreover, we expected these effects to remain after taking into account possible self-selection. To this end, socio-demographic background variables such as education and citizenship status were included in the analysis. One important reason for inconsistent findings from studies on the democratic impact of civic engagement and social trust that has hitherto not been systematically explored could be that certain types of organisation are more likely to generate generalised trust among citizens than others. Accordingly, our second research aim was to examine which specific types of civic organisation influence the level of voter turnout. Putnam (2000) distinguishes between bridging and bonding types of social capital and argues that organisations that generate bridging—rather than bonding—social capital are more likely to cultivate a general sense of trust among their members. In addition, Putnam (1993) suggested that organisations based on horizontal bonds of fellowship are more likely to foster trust than the ones that are based on vertical bonds of authority. We have adopted Putnam's theoretical distinctions to categorise four types of organisation and examine their specific impact on the participation of ethnic minorities in local (Rotterdam) and national elections.

### **Co-Ethnic and Cross-Ethnic Engagement**

According to social capital theory, citizens who participate in civic organisations extend the trust they have in their fellow members to society as a whole. The question remains: What type of organisation is most effective in translating in-group trust into generalised trust? According to Putnam (2000), bridging organisations, encompassing people across social cleavages, are more effective in creating generalised trust. These organisations are structured around weak ties that link distant members of society. In contrast, bonding organisations are typically built on strong ties between close relatives and intimate friends. While strong ties foster a personalised or knowledge-based form of

trust, weak ties are more productive in developing generalised trust (Putnam 2000). In the same vein, Fukuyama (1999) argues that social groups have a certain radius of trust; a circle of people among whom cooperative norms are operative. Among groups that show little or no connection to other groups, this radius of trust is very narrow. Citizens engaged in these groups are less likely to generalise trust and to cooperate with people outside their direct environment. In support of the theoretical distinction between bridging and bonding social capital, Stolle's (1998) study of the general population in Germany and Sweden shows that citizens who join organisations that have a higher proportion of foreigners become more trusting over time than their fellow citizens who are members of nationally homogeneous associations.

In our study we assume that co-ethnic organisations produce mainly bonding social capital while cross-ethnic organisations are more likely to produce bridging social capital. On the basis of this assumption we then examine how becoming a member of a co-ethnic or cross-ethnic organisation relates to the likelihood of political participation. Studies in Berlin, Brussels and Amsterdam that distinguish between ethno-cultural, trade-union and other mainstream types of organisation suggest that the impact of ethno-cultural and more mainstream organisations on (informal) political participation varies between cities and ethnic communities. Across immigrant minorities in Berlin and Amsterdam, co- and cross-ethnic engagement were positively related to a range of political activities like voting, participation in a neighbourhood council, taking part in demonstrations and donating money (Berger *et al.* 2004; Tillie 2004). In Brussels, only being a member of an ethnic association was positively related to the informal political participation of Turks, whereas trade-union membership alone made a difference for Moroccans (Jacobs *et al.* 2004). Finally, Togeby (2004) examined the impact of taking part in ethnic associations, sports clubs and trade unions on immigrant voting in Denmark. Again, her results show varying degrees of correlation between the different forms of civic engagement and local voter turnout across ethnic groups. Since the choice of organisation researched in these studies was not based on a theoretically derived typology, the selective impact of some organisations compared to others in specific contexts is open to interpretation. In the light of Putnam's distinction between bridging and bonding social capital, we expect that ethnic minorities who take part in cross-ethnic rather than co-ethnic organisations are more likely to develop a greater range of cross-cutting ties within society. As a consequence, these people would more readily develop a general sense of trust and thus be more likely to participate in elections:

*H3: among ethnic minorities, participation in cross-ethnic organisations is a better predictor of social trust and voting than participation in co-ethnic organisations.*

### **Client- and Authority-Oriented Organisations**

Putnam (1993) also differentiates between horizontally and vertically ordered organisations. He argues that social capital is fostered most by horizontal networks:

contacts in local, cultural and recreational organisations where members enjoy regular interactions on an equal footing and where they are free to decide whether they trust each other or not. The voluntary nature of these contacts is seen as essential for the development of a strong trusting relationship (Fennema 2004). Conversely, the vertical networks seen in more hierarchically structured organisations do not sustain social trust and cooperation, and are therefore less effective in promoting collective action in democratic societies (Putnam 1993). In essence, the decision to vote, or not, is a classic collective-action problem because, if one individual citizen does not vote, he or she can still enjoy the benefits of democratic government as long as other citizens are casting their votes. But if too many citizens were to no longer bother to vote, their 'free-riding' behaviour would seriously threaten the viability of democratic institutions. Networks in vertical organisations are characterised by dependence on a higher authority instead of mutuality, and hence would allow for opportunism instead of providing a solution for the problem of free riding (Putnam 1993).

More concretely, horizontal bonds of fellowship are characteristic of socio-cultural or recreational organisations. Therefore, these organisations are likely to produce trust among their members. In Kriesi's (1996; see also Kriesi and Baglioni 2003) typology of civic engagement, these types of organisation were categorised as client-oriented. Client-oriented organisations typically provide services to their constituencies and they are primarily involved in community building. They are active in sectors like sport, youth and religious life. Client-oriented organisations are contrasted with so-called authority-oriented organisations. The latter typically mediate between a constituency and political decision-makers and they pursue specific political goals. Examples of authority-oriented organisations are political parties, trade unions and social-movement organisations. In our study, we use Kriesi's (1996) distinction between client and authority orientations as an approximation of the predominance of horizontal versus vertical relations in the organisation. In line with arguments derived from social capital theory, we expect that horizontal bonds of fellowship in client-oriented organisations are the most likely to build social trust, and hence to encourage political participation. Putnam's work (2000) supports this prediction; he finds that regular face-to-face interaction is less common in organisations that can be categorised as authority-oriented. Thus, new social movements or advocacy groups are less likely to invest in setting up local chapters where members can meet. Similarly, Kriesi (1996) has argued that political parties and interest groups do not depend on the direct participation of their constituents to attain their political goals. Instead, they rely on professional staff and institutionalised access to the political arena. Therefore, we expect that ethnic minorities who join client-oriented rather than authority-oriented organisations are more likely to develop trust and hence participate more in elections:

*H4: compared to engagement in authority-oriented organisations, participation in client-oriented organisations is a better predictor of social trust and voting among ethnic minorities.*



## **Turkish and Moroccan Minorities in the Netherlands**

In the Netherlands, people of immigrant origin who legally reside in the country for five years or more are granted local voting rights. Moreover, immigrants and their descendants who have acquired Dutch citizenship status have full political rights. Acquiring Dutch citizenship is relatively easy: immigrants can apply for citizenship through naturalisation after five years of legal residence. The second generation, who are born on Dutch soil from immigrant parents, can opt for a Dutch passport when they turn 18 (i.e. at the transition to adulthood). The third generation, or the grandchildren of immigrants, receives Dutch citizenship status automatically at birth (Entzinger 1999). Along with integration policies, citizenship regimes make up the political opportunity structure: they shape migrant or minority identities and patterns of organisation and political mobilisation (Koopmans 2004). The Dutch opportunity structure used to be relatively favourable for the social and political incorporation of migrants or minorities (Koopmans and Statham 1999). However, recently, Dutch immigration and integration policies have shifted towards a more assimilationist stance. Nevertheless, at the time of our research, most inclusive Dutch policies were still firmly in place, making the Netherlands an interesting test case for multicultural democracy. Rotterdam, in particular, which is not only the most multicultural city of the Netherlands but also the city where multiculturalism is the most politically contested, offers a strategic research setting for the study of minority political mobilisation.

Our study compares the two largest groups of immigrant origin in the Netherlands: Turkish and Moroccan minorities. In both groups, the first generation or immigrants proper were labour migrants in the 1960s and 1970s. Although the Netherlands stopped further labour migration in 1973, the numbers of Turkish and Moroccan minorities continue to grow due to family reunions, births and marriage migration. Mean ages and levels of education among Turkish and Moroccan minorities are roughly comparable. They are in general younger than the native Dutch population and they still have lower average levels of education than natives and post-colonial minorities such as the Surinamese and the Antillians (Dominiguez Martinez *et al.* 2002). From a cross-national perspective, Turkish and Moroccan minorities in the Netherlands exemplify labour migration from the Mediterranean Basin to North-West Europe. Turkish and Moroccan workers are among the most disadvantaged groups in all host countries, in particular in terms of their disproportionate unemployment and economic inactivity (Heath and Cheung 2007).

In spite of the similarities between Turkish and Moroccan minorities in the Netherlands, the two communities show significant differences in terms of voter turnout and in their patterns of civic engagement. Compared to the Moroccan community, Turkish residents participated more in the 1994, 1998 and 2002 local municipal elections in the two major Dutch cities of Amsterdam and Rotterdam (Dominiguez Martinez *et al.* 2002). At a community level and in spite of internal ethnic, political and religious cleavages, the Turkish minority was found to be more

cohesive than the Moroccan—indicated, for example, by the greater number and density of networks of interlinked ethnic associations and businesses, a more concentrated settlement pattern, and greater continuity in cross-border marriages across generations (Böcker 2000; Fennema and Tillie 1999). However, findings from several recent surveys suggest that, at an individual level, Turks do not necessarily participate more in ethnic associational life than Moroccans (Phalet and Haker 2004; Tillie 2004). Apparently, a high number of mutually overlapping ethnic organisations does not necessarily entail more participation in them. Moreover, although Moroccans are less organised and their organisations are less inter-connected at a community level, there are more Moroccan professionals, spokespersons and politicians than Turkish individuals visible in mainstream Dutch media and politics (ter Wal 2004).

Fennema and Tillie (1999) have shown that the Turkish community in Amsterdam has a relatively high number and dense network of linked organisations in comparison to other ethnic communities. Moreover, they also showed that the Turkish community has a higher voter turnout, which can be attributed to the ethnic social capital that has been generated by means of a relatively high number of inter-linked ethnic organisations. Van Heelsom (2005) identified a similar pattern in most other municipalities too, and she related high organisational density among Turks with a higher level of political participation as compared with other minority groups. However, she could not confirm this finding in the communes of The Hague, Rotterdam or Utrecht, where Turkish organisations were outperformed by the ethnic organisations of post-colonial minorities like the Surinamese. The question remains as to what extent participation in ethnic associations predicts a higher turnout at the individual level (cf. Jacobs and Tillie 2004).

The aim of this study is to reproduce the effect of civic engagement on voting at an individual level among Turkish and Moroccan minorities in Rotterdam by means of large-scale survey data. Most importantly, we test Putnam's thesis, derived from social capital theory, that the effect of engagement in civic organisations on voting is mediated by social trust. Extending this argument, the study addresses the following additional question: Do different types of civic organisation differ in their effects on voting? First, we distinguish between co-ethnic and cross-ethnic forms of civic engagement as instances of bonding versus bridging types of social capital. We argue that, compared to co-ethnic engagement, engagement in cross-ethnic organisations is more conducive to the development of generalised trust, and hence should be a better predictor of political participation among ethnic minorities. In addition, we distinguish between authority-oriented and client-oriented organisations as models for predominant vertical versus horizontal network structures. We argue that engagement in horizontally structured client-oriented organisations is more likely to generate social trust, and should hence be a better predictor of voting, than participation in authority-oriented organisations. Finally, the study aims to replicate the same expected relationships between civic engagement, social trust and voting across Turkish and Moroccan minorities and across local and national levels of elections.

## Data and Measures

### Data

To test the link between engagement in civic organisations and voting empirically, we used representative data from the Rotterdam Minorities Survey (RMS: Phalet *et al.* 2000). The RMS includes random samples of 640 Turkish and 544 Moroccan respondents and a native Dutch comparison sample. Adult men and women (ages 18 to 60) of Turkish, Moroccan and native origin were sampled from the commune register. The Turkish and Moroccan samples consisted of immigrants and their descendants, i.e. inhabitants who have at least one parent who was born in Turkey or Morocco. Turkish and Moroccan minorities in Rotterdam are a relatively young and less-qualified population, who are much over-represented among the economically inactive and the unemployed, as well as in unskilled or semi-skilled manual work (Phalet *et al.* 2000). Trained bilingual interviewers of the same ethnic background and gender as the respondent conducted computer-assisted personal interviews (CAPI) at home and in the respondent's language of choice (Dutch, Turkish, Moroccan-Arab or Berber).<sup>1</sup>

### Self-Reported Voting

To measure the dependent variable 'participation in elections' we used the self-reported turnout for the last local (Rotterdam) and national elections in the Rotterdam Minorities Survey. First, all respondents were asked: *'As you know, Turks and Moroccans who do not have Dutch nationality also have a right to vote in municipal elections. Did you vote in the last municipal elections in Rotterdam, or not?'* Next, only respondents with Dutch citizenship were asked: *'Did you vote in the last parliamentary elections or not?'* Responses were coded '0' (no) or '1' (yes). We estimated logistic regressions of the self-reported turnout at the last municipal and national elections on civic engagement and trust, taking into account relevant background characteristics.

In the Rotterdam Minorities Survey, 43 per cent of Turks and 28 per cent of Moroccans reported that they had voted in the last local elections, and 38 and 31 per cent respectively voting in the last national elections. While retrospective self-reported turnout is commonly found to be positively biased, self-reported percentages in the Rotterdam Minorities Survey correspond closely to the turnout rates of immigrant-origin voters that were estimated from the 1998 exit poll in Rotterdam (Tillie 2000): 42 per cent of the Turks turned out to vote at the Rotterdam municipal elections in 1998, and 33 per cent of the Moroccans, with mean voter turnout being 48 per cent.

### Civic Engagement and Trust

To assess civic engagement—the main explanatory variable in this study—respondents were asked: *'Now we will ask a few questions about whether or not you*

take part in certain organised activities. Did you take part in one or more activities of a (Turkish/Moroccan/Dutch youth club) over the last year?' This question was repeated for the complete list of organisations. The advantage of asking about active participation rather than formal membership is that we include all those who actually participate in organisations. Sometimes people who are actively involved are not necessarily registered as members and vice versa and in some cases official members never participate at all. For the purpose of our analysis, overall participation rates were further broken down into the four theoretically derived types of organisation. First, we differentiated between co- and cross-ethnic organisations to represent the bonding-versus-bridging types of social capital they are expected to generate. Organisations that were perceived by respondents as Turkish or Moroccan were categorised as co-ethnic. In contrast, organisations perceived as mixed or mainstream Dutch were categorised as cross-ethnic. In addition, we differentiated between organisations that primarily provide services to their clients and those that mediate between constituencies and political authorities. The latter group is used to represent more horizontally versus vertically structured organisations, since horizontal relationships are expected to generate mutual trust. We categorised sports, youth, religious and neighbourhood associations as client-oriented. Trade unions and social-movement organisations, including women's and anti-racism organisations, were categorised as authority-oriented. Note that participation in both client- and authority-oriented organisations can be either co- or cross-ethnic. Participation in political parties was not included in the analysis, because it is too close to voting behaviour as a dependent variable. Thus, four dummy variables were computed to indicate participation in one or more activities ('1') or none ('0') of client-oriented, authority-oriented, co-ethnic and cross-ethnic organisations over the last year.

Social trust, the hypothesised mediating variable, was measured by means of a sliding scale of five statements taken from the Agreeableness Facet Trust in the Personality Inventory Neuroticism, Extraversion and Openness (NEO) (Costa and McCrae 1992): 'I think most people are honest and reliable'; 'I tend to doubt the good intentions of others'; 'I tend to think about others positively always'; 'I have great trust in the nature of human beings'; and 'I think most people will take advantage of you if they get the chance to do so'. Respondents indicated their agreement on a five-point Likert scale ranging from (1) 'Not true at all' to (5) 'Totally true for me'. Negatively worded items were recoded so that a high score would indicate greater social trust. Given the generally reduced internal consistency of balanced scales, the reliability of composite indices in both samples was considered acceptable ( $\alpha = .54$  for Moroccans;  $.66$  for Turks).

### Control Variables

In previous studies, voter turnout in immigrant minorities has been related to migration history and citizenship status as well as civic engagement (Messina 2004). In order to take migration history into account, we distinguished between the second

(‘1’) and the first generation (‘0’). A second-generation migrant is someone who was either born in the Netherlands or arrived before the age of six. The first generation is a residual category including the older first generation of ‘guestworkers’ and their partners, the in-between or 1.5 generation, and more recent newcomers. Citizenship status was coded ‘0’ if respondents did not have Dutch nationality and ‘1’ if they had acquired it. Electoral studies of the general population show that turnout increases with age and higher levels of education (van Egmond *et al.* 1998). These factors are used to explain voter turnout among ethnic minorities as well (Fieldhouse and Purdam 2002). In general, and especially among ethnic minorities, low socio-economic status and the associated lack of human capital are also found to predict lower turnout in elections (Jacobs and Tillie 2004; Phalet *et al.* 2000). In a related argument, Walzer (2002) points out that socio-economic status may also account for selective engagement in civic organisations, since the poorer members of civil society may simply lack the resources and skills required. Consequently, a stringent test of the expected association between civic engagement and political participation should statistically control for self-selection in terms of human capital and, in the case of immigrants and their offspring, also for access to citizenship. Therefore next to citizenship and generation status, level of education, language proficiency and labour-force status were included as control variables. Education was coded from (1) no qualifications and (2) only primary education up to (5) tertiary or higher qualifications. Labour-force status was measured as either (2) employed or self-employed, or (1) registered as unemployed, with (0) as full-time student, looking after the home or otherwise economically inactive as a reference category. Dutch language proficiency was measured as the mean score on self-reported Dutch speaking and reading skills. Respondents indicated their ability on a 3-point scale from (1) not so well to (3) very well (reliabilities  $\alpha = .89$  for Moroccans and  $.87$  for Turks). Finally, gender and age were included as control variables. Gender was coded ‘0’ for men and ‘1’ for women. Age was a continuous variable measured in years.

## Results

### *Voting*

As can be seen from Table 1, the self-reported voter turnout at the local level is higher among Turks than among Moroccans. However, there is no significant difference in national elections.

### *Engagement in Civic Organisations*

Table 2 shows the percentages of Turkish and Moroccan samples participating in one or more of the organisations categorised as co- or cross-ethnic, client- or authority-oriented. Overall, both minorities are more engaged in co-ethnic than in cross-ethnic or mainstream Dutch organisations. Moreover, they participate more in client-oriented organisations—such as youth or sports clubs and religious or neighbourhood

**Table 1.** Participation of Turkish and Moroccan minorities in local and national elections (percentages of ethnic groups)

|                          | Level of elections |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|
|                          | Local              | National (only citizens) |
| <i>Ethnic background</i> |                    |                          |
| Turkish                  | 43 (N = 630)       | 38 (N = 384)             |
| Moroccan                 | 28 (N = 502)       | 31 (N = 237)             |
| Pearson Chi-Square       | 29.18***           | 3.18                     |

Note: \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

associations—than in authority-oriented ones—such as trade unions and social-movement organisations. However, there is considerable overlap in participation across the distinct types. Thus, of all Turks and Moroccans who are engaged in co-ethnic organisations, more than half are also engaged in cross-ethnic forms. Similarly, of all Turks and Moroccans engaged in client-oriented organisations, roughly one in four are also engaged in authority-oriented ones.

Interestingly, in Rotterdam, overall participation rates are higher for Moroccans than for Turks (Pearson Chi-Square=7.43;  $p < .01$ ). Not only are Moroccans more often engaged in co-ethnic organisations than Turks (Pearson Chi-Square=7.17;  $p < .01$ ), they also participate more in client-oriented (Pearson Chi-Square=9.02;  $p < .01$ ) as well as authority-oriented types of organisation (Pearson Chi-Square = 8.46;  $p < .01$ ). The observed ethnic differences in the individual-level civic engagement of Turks and Moroccans in Rotterdam qualify earlier findings of a more densely structured Turkish associational life at the community level in Amsterdam (Fennema and Tillie 1999; Tillie 2004).

### *Explaining Voter Turnout: Co- and Cross-Ethnic Engagement*

How does the engagement of Turks and Moroccans in civic organisations affect their political participation in local and national elections? We hypothesised that civic

**Table 2.** Participation of Turkish and Moroccan minorities in civic organisations (percentages of ethnic groups)

|  | Ethnic background |          |
|--|-------------------|----------|
|  | Turkish           | Moroccan |
| <i>Total participation</i>                             | 54                | 62       |
| Co-ethnic participation ( <i>Turkish or Moroccan</i> ) | 47                | 55       |
| Cross-ethnic participation ( <i>Dutch</i> )            | 35                | 36       |
| Participation in client-oriented organisations         | 52                | 61       |
| Participation in authority-oriented organisations      | 15                | 22       |
| Total number of respondents                            | N = 640           | N = 544  |

engagement in general would be associated with voting behaviour (H1), and that this association would be mediated by social trust (H2): Turks and Moroccans who participate in civic organisations would generalise mutual trust, and hence would be more likely to vote. Furthermore, it was believed that cross-ethnic forms of participation would be a better predictor of voting than co-ethnic participation, because the creation of bridging social capital would be more likely to translate into generalised trust (H3). Table 3 shows the results of stepwise logistic regressions of self-reported local turnout on civic engagement and social trust. Model 1 estimates the effect of participation in co-ethnic organisations, controlling for the relevant demographic variables. Model 2 adds cross-ethnic engagement. Finally, in Model 3 social trust is added in order to test the mediation hypothesis. Following Baron and Kenny (1986), full or partial mediation is confirmed if both civic engagement and trust have significant effects on voting, and if the direct effect of civic engagement on voting disappears, or is at least significantly reduced, when trust is added in stepwise regressions.

The Turkish models show that Turkish minorities with Dutch citizenship status are much more likely to participate in local elections. Language proficiency and age are also positively related to self-reported local turnout. Gender, unemployment and migration generation have no significant effects. In the first step, we find a positive effect of participation in Turkish organisations on self-reported local turnout, but this effect is no longer significant when we add cross-ethnic engagement in the second step. Apparently, only cross-ethnic organisations have a significant direct effect on voting. Co-ethnic organisations have an indirect effect on voting, through enhanced cross-ethnic engagement. In the third step, social trust among Turks is positively related to self-reported local turnout. But the association between cross-ethnic engagement and turnout is not significantly reduced. Hence, the mediation hypothesis is not supported.

The Moroccan models are similar with respect to the effect of co-ethnic organisations in step one, but this effect disappears when cross-ethnic organisations are added in step two. Again, cross-ethnic participation has a direct effect on local turnout, but co-ethnic participation has only an indirect effect mediated through cross-ethnic forms of participation. Interestingly, the effect size of cross-ethnic participation among Moroccans exceeds the rather weak effect found among Turks. The addition of social trust in the third step does not significantly improve the model. Contrary to expectations, social trust among Moroccans has no significant effect on voting, and hence cannot mediate the association of civic engagement with voting. Finally, the positive effects of age, language proficiency and Dutch citizenship status were the same across both minorities.

In sum, and in line with earlier findings, Turkish and Moroccan minorities who have Dutch citizenship, who speak and read Dutch well, and who are older, are more likely to vote in local elections. In addition and in line with our hypotheses, Turks and Moroccans who participate in civic organisations, in particular those who (also) participate in cross-ethnic or mainstream Dutch organisations, are more likely to vote

**Table 3.** Effects of co- and cross-ethnic engagement on self-reported local turnout: Turkish and Moroccan minorities in Rotterdam  
(effect parameters B, standard errors in brackets)

|                               | Turks            |                  |                  | Moroccans        |                  |                   |
|-------------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|-------------------|
|                               | Model 1          | Model 2          | Model 3          | Model 1          | Model 2          | Model 3           |
| Co-ethnic                     | .536** (.179)    | .314 (.204)      | .302 (.205)      | .502* (.222)     | .061 (.252)      | .059 (.252)       |
| Cross-ethnic                  |                  | .486* (.216)     | .439* (.218)     |                  | 1.074*** (.259)  | 1.069*** (.259)   |
| Trust                         |                  |                  | .315* (.131)     |                  |                  | .104 (.199)       |
| Dutch (non-Dutch citizenship) | .632** (.194)    | .579** (.196)    | .615** (.198)    | .724** (.225)    | .641** (.230)    | .649** (.231)     |
| Women (ref men)               | -.307 (.187)     | -.302 (.189)     | -.271 (.190)     | .114 (.227)      | .230 (.233)      | .230 (.233)       |
| Age (years)                   | .057*** (.009)   | .057*** (.009)   | .056*** (.009)   | .055*** (.012)   | .055*** (.013)   | .055*** (.013)    |
| Migration generation          | -.325 (.247)     | -.365 (.249)     | -.350 (.251)     | .297 (.312)      | .161 (.320)      | .161 (.320)       |
| Education                     | .209* (.101)     | .184 (.102)      | .183 (.102)      | .016 (.106)      | -.027 (.108)     | -.027 (.109)      |
| Employed (ref inactive)       | .016 (.206)      | -.002 (.207)     | -.018 (.207)     | .258 (.244)      | .268 (.249)      | .266 (.250)       |
| Unemployed (ref inactive)     | -.554 (.285)     | -.549 (.288)     | -.533 (.289)     | -.115 (.331)     | -.150 (.336)     | -.139 (.337)      |
| Language proficiency          | .471** (.140)    | .466** (.140)    | .495*** (.141)   | .714** (.214)    | .586** (.218)    | .586** (.218)     |
| Constant                      | -3.969*** (.591) | -3.937*** (.593) | -4.974*** (.745) | -5.460*** (.846) | -5.275*** (.848) | -5.574*** (1.027) |
| Chi-square model              | 96.824           | 101.889          | 107.818          | 51.315           | 69.023           | 69.298            |
| Nagelkerke R <sup>2</sup>     | .193             | .202             | .213             | .144             | .190             | .190              |
| DF                            | 9                | 10               | 11               | 9                | 10               | 11                |
| N                             | 625              | 625              | 625              | 490              | 491              | 490               |

Note: \*\*\*p < 0.001; \*\*p < 0.01; \*p < 0.05.



in local elections. Moreover, Turks with a high level of social trust are also more likely to vote than Moroccans. As opposed to the mediation hypothesis, however, social trust does not explain the democratic impact of civic engagement at the local level.

Table 4 shows the effects of co- and cross-ethnic engagement on the self-reported national turnout of Turks and Moroccans. Among both groups, age has a positive effect. The strong effect of Dutch language proficiency is replicated at the national level for Moroccans but not for Turks. Instead, a positive effect of education is found among Turks.<sup>2</sup> More importantly, the expected effects of civic engagement on Turkish and Moroccan voter turnout are not confirmed with respect to national elections. In the Moroccan group, the only significant effect of co-ethnic engagement is lost when cross-ethnic participation is added to the model. In the Turkish group, only the positive effect of social trust on voting is replicated at the national level. Again, the mediation hypothesis is not supported.

To summarise, Turks and Moroccans who are older, and those who know Dutch well (Moroccans) or who have higher qualifications and a high level of social trust (Turks) are more likely to vote in national elections. But the expected impact of civic engagement in co- or cross-ethnic organisations is not replicated at the national level. One should keep in mind, however, that the regressions of national voter turnout are based on smaller numbers of respondents with Dutch citizenship status only.

#### *Explaining Voter Turnout: Client- and Authority-Oriented Organisations*

Finally, we hypothesised that participation in more horizontally structured client-oriented organisations would have a stronger effect on voter turnout than participation in vertically structured or authority-oriented organisations (H4), and used the stepwise logistic regressions in Tables 5 and 6 to test its effects on self-reported local and national turnout. Each column in the tables presents an additional step in stepwise regressions: Model 1 shows the effect of participation in client-oriented organisations. In Model 2 we add participation in authority-oriented organisations. Finally in Model 3 we add social trust to test whether the effects of these engagement types are mediated by social trust.

As expected, Table 5 shows a positive effect of participation in client-oriented organisations on the self-reported local turnout of Turks. However, the effect is no longer significant when participation in authority-oriented organisations is added. Apparently, participation in client-oriented organisations has only an indirect effect on voting in local elections by means of the link with authority-oriented organisations. Contrary to expectations, therefore, authority-oriented participation is the best predictor of the self-reported local turnout of Turks. Trust also has a positive effect, but it does not reduce the association between civic engagement and local voting. Hence, the mediation hypothesis is not supported.

Among Moroccans, we find the expected positive effect of participation in client-oriented organisations on self-reported local turnout. But this effect is significantly reduced when participation in authority-oriented organisations is added. The effect

**Table 4.** Effects of co- and cross-ethnic engagement on self-reported national turnout: Turkish and Moroccan minorities in Rotterdam  
(effect parameters B, standard errors in brackets)

|                           | Turks            |                 |                  | Moroccans         |                   |                   |
|---------------------------|------------------|-----------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
|                           | Model 1          | Model 2         | Model 3          | Model 1           | Model 2           | Model 3           |
| Co-ethnic                 | .371 (.222)      | .244 (.257)     | .240 (.260)      | .680* (.316)      | .363 (.358)       | .371 (.359)       |
| Cross-ethnic              |                  | .263 (.264)     | .152 (.269)      |                   | .722 (.371)       | .702 (.372)       |
| Trust                     |                  |                 | .537** (.173)    |                   |                   | .280 (.297)       |
| Women (ref men)           | -.057 (.232)     | -.054 (.232)    | .001 (.236)      | -.544 (.328)      | -.410 (.336)      | -.438 (.338)      |
| Age (years)               | .027* (.013)     | .027* (.013)    | .027* (.013)     | .057* (.022)      | .051* (.023)      | .050* (.023)      |
| Migration generation      | -.535 (.308)     | -.557 (.309)    | -.557 (.314)     | -.404 (.446)      | -.635 (.465)      | -.635 (.466)      |
| Education                 | .307* (.125)     | .289* (.127)    | .285* (.129)     | .002 (.153)       | -.036 (.155)      | -.041 (.156)      |
| Employed (ref inactive)   | -.068 (.247)     | -.084 (.247)    | -.120 (.251)     | .147 (.355)       | .177 (.360)       | .164 (.363)       |
| Unemployed (ref inactive) | -.377 (.358)     | -.384 (.360)    | -.404 (.364)     | -.448 (.469)      | -.419 (.472)      | -.400 (.473)      |
| Language proficiency      | .268 (.172)      | .268 (.172)     | .317 (.174)      | 1.466*** (.372)   | 1.415*** (.376)   | 1.432*** (.377)   |
| Constant                  | -2.472*** (.750) | -2.471** (.751) | -4.191*** (.951) | -6.414*** (1.463) | -6.194*** (1.470) | -7.018*** (1.729) |
| Chi-square model          | 23.698           | 24.689          | 34.796           | 38.743            | 42.560            | 43.456            |
| Nagelkerke R <sup>2</sup> | .082             | .085            | .119             | .214              | .233              | .238              |
| DF                        | 8                | 9               | 10               | 8                 | 9                 | 10                |
| N                         | 381              | 381             | 381              | 235               | 234               | 235               |

Note: \*\*\*p < 0.001; \*\*p < 0.01; \*p < 0.05.

**Table 5.** Effects of participation in client- and authority-oriented organisations on self-reported local turnout: Turkish and Moroccan minorities in Rotterdam (*parameter estimates B, standard errors in brackets*)

|                               | Turks            |                  |                  | Moroccans        |                  |                   |
|-------------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|-------------------|
|                               | Model 1          | Model 2          | Model 3          | Model 1          | Model 2          | Model 3           |
| Client-oriented               | .512** (.179)    | .278 (.190)      | .229 (.192)      | .605** (.232)    | .496* (.252)     | .493 (.252)       |
| Authority-oriented            |                  | 1.021*** (.264)  | 1.038*** (.267)  |                  | .325 (.290)      | .315 (.291)       |
| Trust                         |                  |                  | .343** (.132)    |                  |                  | .120 (.196)       |
| Dutch (non-Dutch citizenship) | .613** (.194)    | .626** (.196)    | .659** (.198)    | .711** (.224)    | .702** (.225)    | .713** (.225)     |
| Women (ref men)               | -.331 (.187)     | -.454* (.192)    | -.421* (.194)    | .135 (.227)      | .021 (.250)      | .026 (.250)       |
| Age (years)                   | .056*** (.009)   | .056*** (.009)   | .056*** (.009)   | .055** (.012)    | .054*** (.012)   | .054*** (.012)    |
| Migration generation          | -.379 (.248)     | -.315 (.251)     | -.296 (.253)     | .228 (.313)      | .243 (.315)      | .241 (.315)       |
| Education                     | .209* (.101)     | .192 (.102)      | .190 (.103)      | .016 (.106)      | -.002 (.107)     | -.002 (.107)      |
| Employed (ref inactive)       | -.010 (.205)     | -.031 (.208)     | -.051 (.209)     | .276 (.244)      | .255 (.246)      | .252 (.246)       |
| Unemployed (ref inactive)     | -.556 (.285)     | -.504 (.288)     | -.488 (.289)     | -.093 (.330)     | -.086 (.330)     | -.071 (.331)      |
| Language proficiency          | .471** (.139)    | .437** (.142)    | .467** (.143)    | .700** (.215)    | .700** (.215)    | .699** (.215)     |
| Constant                      | -3.896*** (.586) | -3.822*** (.595) | -4.946*** (.749) | -5.534*** (.849) | -5.439*** (.853) | -5.781*** (1.023) |
| Chi-square model              | 96.019           | 111.516          | 118.413          | 53.554           | 54.803           | 55.181            |
| Nagelkerke R <sup>2</sup>     | .191             | .219             | .232             | .149             | .153             | .154              |
| DF                            | 9                | 10               | 11               | 9                | 10               | 11                |
| N                             | 625              | 626              | 625              | 492              | 493              | 492               |

Note: \*\*\*p < 0.001; \*\*p < 0.01; \*p < 0.05.

**Table 6.** Effects of participation in client- and authority-oriented organisations on self-reported national turnout: Turkish and Moroccan minorities in Rotterdam (*parameter estimates B, standard errors in brackets*)

|                           | Turks           |                 |                  | Moroccans         |                   |                   |
|---------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
|                           | Model 1         | Model 2         | Model 3          | Model 1           | Model 2           | Model 3           |
| Client-oriented           | .271 (.223)     | .083 (.237)     | .002 (.242)      | 1.038** (.345)    | .993** (.369)     | .989** (.370)     |
| Authority-oriented        |                 | .806* (.312)    | .796* (.316)     |                   | .138 (.406)       | .113 (.408)       |
| Trust                     |                 |                 | .548** (.173)    |                   |                   | .272 (.300)       |
| Women (ref men)           | -.085 (.230)    | -.169 (.235)    | -.112 (.239)     | -.530 (.331)      | -.571 (.353)      | -.588 (.354)      |
| Age (years)               | .025* (.013)    | .025* (.013)    | .026* (.013)     | .055* (.023)      | .055* (.023)      | .054* (.023)      |
| Migration generation      | -.576 (.308)    | -.515 (.311)    | -.508 (.317)     | -.579 (.455)      | -.573 (.456)      | -.576 (.456)      |
| Education                 | .315* (.125)    | .297* (.126)    | .287* (.129)     | -.004 (.155)      | -.011 (.156)      | -.016 (.157)      |
| Employed (ref inactive)   | -.090 (.245)    | -.134 (.248)    | -.176 (.252)     | .202 (.360)       | .197 (.361)       | .182 (.363)       |
| Unemployed (ref inactive) | -.372 (.358)    | -.335 (.360)    | -.364 (.363)     | -.350 (.475)      | -.341 (.475)      | -.325 (.476)      |
| Language proficiency      | .263 (.172)     | .241 (.173)     | .291 (.176)      | 1.435*** (.372)   | 1.437*** (.372)   | 1.451*** (.374)   |
| Constant                  | -2.361** (.742) | -2.285** (.749) | -4.043*** (.948) | -6.583*** (1.469) | -6.542*** (1.472) | -7.335*** (1.734) |
| Chi-square model          | 22.385          | 29.147          | 39.658           | 43.725            | 43.840            | 44.664            |
| Nagelkerke R <sup>2</sup> | .078            | .100            | .134             | .239              | .240              | .244              |
| DF                        | 8               | 9               | 10               | 8                 | 9                 | 10                |
| N                         | 381             | 381             | 381              | 235               | 233               | 235               |

Note: \*\*\*p < 0.001; \*\*p < 0.01; \*p < 0.05.

of authority-oriented participation on local voting is too weak to be significant. As we saw before, social trust is not related to the self-reported local turnout of Moroccans. Finally, the Turkish and Moroccan models both display the positive impact of Dutch citizenship, Dutch language mastery and age on the willingness to vote in local elections.

To summarise: in accordance with our last hypothesis, Turks and Moroccans who participate in client-oriented organisations, such as youth and sports clubs, neighbourhood and religious associations, are more likely to vote in local elections. Among Turks, however, this effect is mediated by a much stronger effect of participation in authority-oriented organisations such as trade unions or social-movement organisations. Among Moroccans, participation in authority-oriented organisations does not make a significant difference. However, contrary to expectations, the impact of participation in client- or authority-oriented civic organisations on voting behaviour is not mediated by social trust.

Next, we turn to the effects of participation in client- and authority-oriented organisations on the self-reported voting turnout at national elections of Turks and Moroccans (see Table 6). Among Turks only participation in authority-oriented organisations has a positive effect. Social trust is a powerful predictor of national voting turnout as well, but it does not mediate the relationship between authority-oriented engagement and voting turnout. Conversely, among Moroccans, only participation in client-oriented organisations has the expected positive effect on self-reported national voting turnout. Again, social trust among Moroccans does not predict it.

To summarise, the evidence of our last hypothesis about the importance of more horizontally structured client-oriented types of organisation on voting behaviour was mixed. Depending on the ethnic-community context, both participation in client-oriented (Moroccans) and in authority-oriented organisations (Turks) can be an incentive for voter participation. Second, we do not find support for the mediation hypothesis, since social trust does not mediate the associations of voting behaviour with participation in client- or authority-oriented organisations, in spite of a consistent finding that Turks with high levels of social trust are more likely than Moroccans to vote at both the local and the national level.

## **Discussion**

European countries share a common interest in the civic incorporation of increasing numbers of residents of immigrant origin. With a view to incorporating ethnic minorities, some host societies like the Netherlands have supported the development of ethnic self-organisations and have set up consultative bodies in which self-organisations are represented (Entzinger 1999). Building on social capital theory, an important argument for ethnic self-organisation is that co-ethnic organisations not only represent the interests of minority constituencies, they also help their members to integrate into the host society and political system. More in general, Putnam

(1993, 2002) has argued that civic organisations generate the social capital that is needed to sustain democratic institutions; citizens who participate in civic organisations are more likely to comply with civic duties, because they trust that others do too.

We began this study by deriving two hypotheses from Putnam's interpretation of social capital theory: civic engagement is positively related to participation in local and national elections (H1), and this relationship is mediated by social trust (H2). In addition, we formulated hypotheses about the types of organisation of ethnic minorities that are most likely to generate generalised trust, and thereby, to support political participation in the receiving society. To empirically test the links between engaging in civic organisations, trust and voting, we used the Rotterdam Minorities Survey, and estimated logistic regressions of Turkish and Moroccan self-reported voting in the last local and national elections on distinct types of civic engagement and on social trust.

Overall, and in line with the first hypothesis, our findings support the expected associations between civic engagement and formal political participation among ethnic minorities. More precisely, after taking into account formal citizenship status, age and human capital, Turks and Moroccans who are more actively engaged in civic organisations are significantly more likely to vote. Although all significant effects are in the expected direction, the largest effects are generally found at the local rather than at the national level, possibly because the local level is more accessible (Koopmans 2004). Importantly, the impact of civic engagement on voter turnout in this study cannot be dismissed as mere self-selection of the more qualified or more assimilated members of ethnic minorities, who are typically more able and willing to participate actively in civil society *and* in politics. Not surprisingly, we find that access to political rights and the relevant human capital, in particular Dutch language mastery, greatly increases the likelihood of ethnic minorities casting their votes. Nevertheless, civic engagement makes an additional difference in voter turnout, over and above citizenship status and human capital.

But the data do not support the hypothesis that social trust is the key mediating mechanism that connects civic engagement with voting behaviour. Rather, our findings suggest that political socialisation processes in civic organisations are probably of a different or more specific nature than social trust. Closer examination of the varying impacts of distinct types of civic organisation on voting suggests a number of possible alternative explanations, some of which are discussed below, and which provide pointers for future research.

The pattern of results shows that it is indeed helpful to distinguish between types of civic organisation. Specifically, our third hypothesis compares (perceived) co- and cross-ethnic organisations. Building on a conceptual distinction between bonding and bridging types of social capital, we expected and found that cross-ethnic organisations had stronger impact on political participation than co-ethnic ones. In general, our study confirms the expected positive relationship between civic involvement and voter turnout. More precisely, the positive impact of participation

in co-ethnic organisations on local voting was mediated through cross-ethnic participation. Interestingly, we find higher levels of participation in co-ethnic than in cross-ethnic organisations, and considerable overlap between both forms of participation. This pattern suggests that ethnic associations may play an important role in enabling minorities to access more mainstream organisations. The enabling role of ethnic associational life should be situated within the Dutch political opportunity structure for ethnic minorities. In the past, the Dutch variant of multiculturalism supported ethnic associations and aimed to involve them as partners in political decision-making. It would be interesting to compare the Dutch context with socio-political contexts that are less inclusive towards minorities as citizens and as political actors, such as Germany. Contrary to theoretical expectations however, the effect of cross-ethnic participation on local voting was not mediated by generalised trust. Specifically, Turkish and Moroccan residents who participate (also) in cross-ethnic organisations are more likely to vote; and Turks (but not Moroccans) who are more trusting of people they do not know, are also more likely to vote; but they are not more inclined to trust their fellow citizens *because* they participate in cross-ethnic organisations. This finding is in line with Togeby's (2004) study of minority civic engagement and voting turnout in Denmark, which also failed to confirm the mediating role of trust. Togeby concludes that the mobilising effect of some organisations does not take place through the accumulation of social capital. Alternatively, it could be that trust is operative at the aggregate level of whole communities or societies rather than at the individual level of citizens (Tillie 2004). According to social capital theory, however, generalised social trust is typically rooted in overlapping horizontal relationships between individual citizens at the micro level (Putnam 2000). So it seems reasonable to expect significant associations at the individual level too. Another possible explanation of the failure to find evidence of the mediating role of social trust is that non-normative aspects of social capital may be better predictors of political behaviour, such as the enhanced access to relevant (political) information, civic competence or skills or the effective mobilisation of community members (Verba *et al.* 1995). Indeed, social capital is a much broader concept than Putnam's civic virtues, which narrowly refer to its normative aspects of generalised reciprocity and enforceable trust.

Furthermore, the impact of civic engagement does not just depend on distinct types of organisation but also on local or national levels of elections. Contrary to expectations, cross-ethnic participation did not significantly enhance national voting among Turkish and Moroccan citizens. In other words, the expected association of cross-ethnic participation with voting was confirmed only at the local level. This might be an effect of the level of election but differential results can also be a consequence of the fact that only citizens can vote at the national level. More research is needed about the socio-political (and not just legal) meaning and consequences of access to national citizenship in one's country of residence. We saw that citizenship status has a significant positive impact on the political participation of Turkish and Moroccan minorities at the local level, in spite of the fact that citizenship is not a formal requisite

for local voting rights in the Netherlands. Moreover, the positive influence of national membership was significant over and above age, generational status and human capital, in particular Dutch language mastery. Hence, the citizenship effect cannot be dismissed as mere self-selection of those minorities who are better equipped to participate in the civil and political life of the receiving country. Acquiring Dutch citizenship and joining cross-ethnic organisations possibly represent distinct paths to political incorporation. Alternatively, a common explanation of civic engagement and national membership may be sought in processes of ethnic and national identification among immigrant minorities (Reicher and Hopkins 2001). Specifically, minorities who actively engage in civil society, or who acquire citizenship, may identify more strongly with their country of residence, or they may at least feel less threatened in their ethnic identity. Clearly, more research is needed on the interconnections between minority identities and their civic and political behaviour (Brubaker and Cooper 2000).

The fourth and last hypothesis (H4) elaborates an additional distinction between so-called client-oriented and authority-oriented types of civic organisation. It was expected that client-oriented organisations, such as sports or youth clubs and neighbourhood or religious associations, would be the most influential, because their predominant horizontal structure would be the most likely to generate mutual trust. This hypothesis was confirmed for Moroccans but not for Turks. As expected, Moroccans who participate more in client-oriented organisations are more likely to vote in local and national elections. Conversely and against theoretical expectations, Turks who participate more in authority-oriented organisations are more likely to vote in both local and national elections. Apparently, the democratic impact of civic engagement does not only depend on the type of organisation, but also on the ethnic community context. Furthermore, none of the associations was significantly mediated by social trust.

Why would authority-oriented organisations influence voter turnout among Turks in Rotterdam? The data show that the impact of participation in authority-oriented organisations—especially those with a Turkish background—is the most pronounced at the local level. Interestingly, in the 1998 elections in Rotterdam, the Christian-Democrat list included a Turkish candidate, with the result that no less than 53 per cent of the Turkish minorities turned out to vote (Tillie 2000). This percentage was at once much lower in other big cities and much higher than in previous elections (Tillie 2000). Hence, one reason for the unexpected impact of Turkish authority-oriented organisations may be that they were the most effective in organising so-called ‘block voting’ for ‘their’ Turkish candidate. Going beyond the specific case of block voting, our findings concerning the Turkish group strongly suggest the importance and impact of the vertical, as well as horizontal, integration of ethnic communities and civic organisations. Vertical integration refers to the connectedness of a particular community or organisation with local or national political institutions and decision-makers. In social capital theory, this less-well-researched aspect of institutional connectedness or so-called ‘linking’



social capital has been distinguished from more horizontally connecting bonding and bridging forms of social capital (Woolcock 1998).

Finally, a major limitation of this study is that the causal direction of associations between civic engagement and political participation was not empirically determined. Taking an approach to causality as robust association, we included relevant preceding variables such as citizenship status and Dutch language mastery. In this way, we could show that the association of civic engagement with voting behaviour is robust, in other words it cannot be attributed to pure self-selection of active citizens. Robust association is a necessary but not sufficient condition for causal inference (Cox and Wehrmuth 2001). Unfortunately, our data did not confirm the role of social trust as a mediating mechanism—the theoretical micro-foundation of the hypothesised impact of civic engagement on voting behaviour (Goldthorpe 2001). Therefore, in the absence of mediation by social trust, the observed association between civic engagement and voting is open to competing explanations. In looking for these, future research should consider specific dimensions of social capital in civic organisations, including access to information, resource mobilisation, and vertical links to political decision-makers (Verba *et al.* 1995; Woolcock 1998). Indeed, such vertical linkages constitute linking social capital, which is the strong point of authority-oriented types of organisation. In addition, there is a rich source of possible alternative explanations for immigrant or minority political behaviour in the extensive literature on the political mobilisation of ethnic and national identities among immigrant minorities (Brubaker and Cooper 2000). Furthermore, there are obvious data limitations. In particular, time-lagged or time-referenced context data are needed to give more solid empirical ground to the explanatory status of social capital as a driving force of democratic incorporation (Van Egmond *et al.* 1998).

Lastly, the present study should be repeated in other multicultural cities in order to throw more light on the impact of local and national opportunity structures (Koopmans and Statham 1999). The special issue of *JEMS* guest-edited by Jacobs and Tillie in 2004 was a first step in this direction. Across Europe, millions of people of immigrant origin are being granted citizenship and voting rights. As a consequence, the increasing ethnic diversity of electorates poses new challenges to established national democratic institutions. Therefore, the political participation of immigrants and minorities should continue to be high on a comparative European research agenda; indeed, their incorporation in national politics and civil societies will be a critical touchstone of the democratic legitimacy of our political institutions.

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## Notes

- [1] Excluding invalid addresses and interviews there was an overall response rate of 64 per cent among Turks and 57 per cent among Moroccans. To correct for selective non-response, data were post-stratified to reflect the gender-by-age-by-education distribution of the Turkish and Moroccan population in Rotterdam. For more information on the data we refer to the technical report (Van Lotringten and Phalet 2000).
- [2] There is a significant positive correlation between language proficiency and level of education among Turks (.420\*\*) and among Moroccans (.515\*\*).

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